

Bloom Later by orphan_account

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Summary:

Sometimes the only thing that kept him going was knowing no matter what, his friends and family would fight for him as hard as they could. One problem though, Will had a secret that might change their minds.

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Alternative summary: Will comes out to Joyce.

Bloom Later

It's been a tough two years for Will Byers. There was a time that he begged for normality-- He prayed that after everything was through with, he would go back to having normal problems. When possessed he missed when his biggest problem was Troy or his father, he missed being somewhat normal. All of his pain and self-hatred came bubbling all up and he just wanted it to be over.

Alas, his family burned the monster out of him. The physical turmoil was somewhat over, only a single scar where Mike's sister jammed the hot metal into his side. It didn't compare.

The physical pain was gone, but honestly? His mental state was absolutely scrambled. He would wake up in the middle of the night and still feel the ghost of the Mind Flayer in his veins taking control of his body. It wasn't real, he knew that it wasn't but that didn't make it any easier.

He begged that after everything was over, he'd go back to having normal problems. He thought that if he went through this he could deal with the bullying and the weird looks, but instead it just added more fire to the flame. Instead of his nickname changing to faggot into zombie boy, it was both faggot and zombie boy. Sometimes they would call him queer, sometimes they would call him undead.

Will began to notice his grades were dropping, due to the fact he would often go into a daze or distract himself during school. He would do anything to just forget.

"Are you sure you're okay?" Joyce would always ask him, and he would repeatedly say yes even though he could still feel the dirt-filled air of the upside down in his lungs or the Mind Flayer's paralyzing venom in his bones. He didn't want anyone to worry about him anymore. He just wanted to be normal, but he knew he would never really be just that.

Sometimes the only thing that kept him going was knowing no matter what, his friends and family would fight for him as hard as they could. One problem though, Will had a secret that might change

their minds; Will was gay.

Will first knew he was gay when he knew what the word meant. He was seven years old and watching baseball with his dad. He was never interested in the sport, but his father was fond of it, so he stuck around and ate popcorn while Lonnie screamed at the small television.

“Can’t even hit the damn thing, fuckin’ fags.” He hissed it. It wasn’t the first time Will has heard his father say the word, but it was the first time he questioned it.

“What does fag mean?” he asked quietly. His father turned sharply towards him and laughed in his face.

“It’s uh—gay person.” He chuckled “Don’t say fag around Joyce, now. She’ll kill me.” He pointed at him. Will realized he hated when he was pointed at.

That didn’t answer his question. “What is a gay person?” he pushed. His father frowned, and for a moment, Will was scared of him.

“Disgusting, that’s what they are.” He spat, as if the thought of the word repulsed. Will kept staring at him for an answer, and it was fast “A man who likes a man. Fuckin’ weird.” He said it in a way that was very hostile, in a way that said don’t get any ideas. But he was always gay, now he just knows that there’s more people like him.

Will has been scared of him since. Believe Will Byers when he says he knows what it’s like to be scared.

It didn’t matter for a few years. He would agree with whomever his friends said was pretty and pretend to have crushes to fit in, but it didn’t stick for that long. He got tired. Will Byers was no liar, yet he’s been lying this whole time.

It really started eating at him in eighth grade. He would find himself leaving the gym to change just so he wouldn’t have to go into the locker room. Luckily, nobody really suspected anything. Troy called him fag but, whatever. Troy called at least five people fags. It only hurt a little. The worst was lying to his mom, though.

“You are so handsome. I bet all the girls have a crush on you.” She said to him one morning after trying on a new sweater. It was a sweet compliment and he felt happy, but there was this little piece of him that felt like he was decaying. Like he was a zombie.

The names that they call him seem to all be true at this point. It’s all fact to him. It was slowly killing him, he could feel it.

Sometimes the guilt would be too much, and he would lock himself away for days for he didn’t have to lie this way. He was alone, and there was no lying to himself. That’s when Joyce would become worried, because Joyce thought he was too much like her.

“Will, baby? Why don’t you come to get groceries with me today? Would that be okay?” She said kindly. Will loved her so much. He shouldn’t lie to her, but he was too terrified to do anything about it. He didn’t want her to worry, but he didn’t know if he could handle going outside yet.

“I don’t know.” He said, finally sitting up from his bed for the first time today “I don’t feel good.” He half lied, rotting.

Will should’ve known this only made Joyce more worried “Are you having episodes again-“

“No! No. It’s not like that.” Will cut her off, and she visibly deflated in relief “I’m just scared something’s going to happen.”

She looked at him with understanding eyes, and why did she always have to understand? Because at this point he barely felt himself anymore, and that wasn’t the Upside Down, that wasn’t the Mind Flayer. That was him, all him. Sure the extra-dimensional trauma didn’t help, but it wasn’t why he felt like stepped on dog shit. This was his fault, and he was broken.

“What do you think would happen?” His mother softly said.

Will misunderstood the question, being so caught up in his thoughts, but answered from the top of his head “Everyone would hate me.” He barely spoke. The words felt like lumps in his throat.

He knew from the moment he said those words, he was going to end

up telling Joyce the truth for once and it was an uneven mixture of exhilarating and terrifying.

Joyce knew her son wasn't talking about the grocery store anymore "Why do you think that?" she kept her voice steady, making sure not to push Will into answering right away.

Will couldn't help but remember what his brother said about not liking things for the sake of other people and almost laugh at it. Jonathan probably already knew and was trying to be a sneaky little shit about it, Will thought. He probably found his River Phoenix collection underneath the third couch cushion. It made his heart ache. If Jonathan still loved him, surely his mother would too, right?

Right?

This is where the terror and self-doubt comes crashing in like a bullet through a window, followed by the sweet sound of what ifs. Will swallowed it down like a blade of glass and said, fuck it.

Out loud.

Oops?

Joyce gasped at the profanity "William Byers!" she shrieked "Watch your language!"

"I'm gay." He said it as fast as his mouth would let him, and he slammed his eyes shut, waiting for the words to punch him in the gut. The words never came. At first Will thought her mom didn't hear him, and contemplated saying it again, but all that same out was a choked "I'm sorry."

When did he start crying?

He could hear words of comfort being said, but they were inaudible. His (now wet) eyes were still closed. He was still waiting for the punches.

He didn't open his eyes until he felt his mother's arms being protectively wrapped around him, sobbing as he realized his mother was crying too. He started to come back down to Earth and start listening to what his mother had been nonsensically saying.

“I love you so much. I’m so proud of you, I always knew. I’m here for you.” She repeated, over and over. Will’s eyes widened in disbelief and his tears changed from fear into happiness. He felt lighter in every way possible as Joyce pulled back from the hug with a small smile on her face and wiped away his tears with her thumb.

“I won’t tell anyone if you don’t want me to, even Jonathan. It can be just us for now if you want.” She said, her hands still light on his face.

While he did want Jonathan to know, he nodded “Just us.” He repeated. He wasn’t ready for the whole world to know, and that was okay.

Joyce hugged him again “I’m so proud of you.” She said with a wide smile, and found her way outside his door. She waved at him before she closed the door easily, letting Will take everything in.

For the first time in a long time, Will Byers felt safe.

Author's Note:

Should I continue this?